

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

After seeing what upgrades have been given to the Abrams M1A2 Systems Enhancement Package Version 2 that I have been on since 2016 and to the new Advanced Multipurpose (AMP) round that might potentially be issued in a time of war, I am under the impression that the overall design and capability of how good the M1 can be is being ruined by good-idea fairies.

When I first arrived at my battalion, we had the flex mount for the tank commander (TC)'s .50-caliber weapon. A few years ago, we had the flex mount replaced with Common Remote-Operated Weapon Station (CROWS) 3 ("lo pro CROWS"). The "lo pro CROWS" has become an absolute waste of money to have on the tank. Why? Because it's another electronic thing that breaks or stops working, and the .50-cal solenoid loses timing. To keep it working requires extra time to ensure that it will work properly – vs. the flex mount, which was simple and easy.

Also, the "lo pro CROWS" blocks the TC's forward vision when he is either in nametape defilade or when he has his hatch in "open protective" mode. And it turns the TC into a gunner when he is trying to use it vs. having his head out of the hatch to correctly survey the battlefield. The best thing for the tank is to get rid of the costly and problematic CROWS and replace it with the flex mount (Commander's Weapon Station).

The AMP round, in concept, is great. The biggest issue I foresee with it is that the Ammunition Data Link that interfaces with the round may break. When that happens, with my understanding of the round, it basically turns it into a glorified high-explosive (HE) anti-tank (AT) round, which defeats the purpose of developing this new round. The AMP round's capabilities are fantastic; the issue is that it relies on electronic components that will break at the worst time.

A better alternative is to take the multipurpose AT round and turn it into an HE round. How to accomplish this? By my understanding, removing all the penetrating cones' components and cramming the projectile with explosives would do it. Then replace the fuse from air/ground to impact/delay, with the fuse set from the factory on impact.

Why an HE round? Because as I read many accounts from World War II, I saw that all sides expended, on average, significantly more HE rounds than armor-piercing (AP) rounds. And when in heavy tank-on-tank combat during World War II, HE was still expended more than AP. Having an analog system is generally more reliable and simple to understand/maintain. Especially for main-gun rounds.

Another improvement for the Gunner's Primary Sight/ Thermal Imaging System would be to have the turret/hull position shown in the optic rather than just on the Gunner's Control Display Panel. It would be something similar to how it is in the Commander's Independent Thermal Viewer (CITV). The only difference is that it wouldn't show where the CITV is looking.

SGT BEN SCHNEIDER

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2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest articles related to armored cavalry in both the Fall 2021 and Winter 2022 issues of **ARMOR**. The two-part article, "Armor Operations in the Battle of Hue: Readyng Armor for Future Urban Operations," by LTC (Retired) Lee Kichen is exceptional in detailing the need for armored reconnaissance and security in urban areas. LTC Cole Pinhiero's "Resurrecting the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment" and MAJ Greg Marsh's "Task Force-Management Approach for the Division Cavalry Squadron," both in the Fall 2021 issue, were well-written and convincing. I commend all three of these authors for their professionalism, dedicated research and insightful articles.

COLONEL (RETIRED) DAVID TEEPLES

43rd Chief of Armor
Honorary Colonel, 3rd Cavalry Regiment

Dear Editor,

At Tillet, Belgium, the Germans staged a brilliant defense against the U.S. 761st Tank Battalion, aided by angry, low-hanging clouds and subzero temperatures. Mobility was limited to the roads only. On the hilltops above Tillet, the

enemy positioned forward observers. On reverse slopes sprawled well-concealed artillery units that had the roads zeroed in. It was a bloodbath for the combatants, especially for the exposed infantry, as German and American tanks battled it out.

Finally, on the evening of Jan. 9, the Germans could no longer continue their resistance and withdrew, with elements of 761st Tank Battalion and 87th Infantry Division in pursuit. Together they set up barricades along the Marche-Bastogne Road and choked off the vital supply artery to German operations in the Bulge.

More than three-quarters of a century have passed since the blood-stained ground in and around Tillet shuddered with the shock of battle. But how different today is! Belgium has been liberated. The pounding of hostile guns no longer echoes through the valleys.

We dedicated this plaque (Figure 1) in honor of 761st Tank Battalion Oct. 31, 2021.

JOE WILSON JR.

Son of Tech5 Joe Wilson Sr., Company B, 761st Tank Battalion



Figure 1. Plaque posted in Tillet, Belgium, honoring 761st Tank Battalion.

Acronym Quick-Scan

AMP – Advanced Multipurpose (Round)

AP – armor-piercing

AT – anti-tank

CITV – Commander's Independent Thermal Viewer

CROWS – Common Remote-Operated Weapon Station

HE – high explosive

TC – tank commander